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MARKETING ACTIVITIES

January 1944



Issued monthly by the OFFICE OF DISTRIBUTION
WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION

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BUSTING THE BLOCKADE IN THE CARIBBEAN

By Sophia Podolsky Page 3

Puerto Rico, always vulnerable to hunger, was virtually blockaded by Hitler's submarines in 1942. But the food got through. Today the situation is looking better than it has for a long time. Miss Podolsky is a writer on the staff of the Marketing Reports Division, Office of Distribution.

LET'S HAVE ANOTHER CUP OF TEA

By Joe Boyle Page 9

The big problem on this article was finding a place to stop. Tea has such an interesting history, so many "angles," it would take a big book to cover the subject completely. But Joe Boyle, Marketing Reports Division staff writer, has sorted out a few of the things he feels you ought to know.

VEGETABLE SEEDS IN 1944

By W. A. Wheeler Page 13

Victory Gardeners are lucky this year. Growers put on an extra burst of energy in 1943 and turned out the seeds you will need for this spring's planting. However, W. A. Wheeler, one of the country's real experts on the subject of seed marketing, warns against waste. We don't have any seeds to throw away, he says.

WOODEN CONTAINERS: SCARCE

By L. C. Carey Page 17

Wooden containers are scarce as kind-hearted Japs--well, maybe not that scarce. But there aren't enough new ones to go around and the fruit and vegetable industry will just have to make the old ones do. L. C. Carey, formerly in charge of enforcement of the Standard Container Acts, knows whereof he speaks.

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BLOCKADE BUSTING IN THE CARIBBEAN

. . . . By Sophia Podolsky

The Axis tried to blockade Puerto Rico--but we fooled them. When they began sinking ships that were transporting food and other essentials to the island, we leap-frogged supplies across from island to island. After the sub menace was licked, we were able--in spite of the many demands on American resources--to send by ship more food and other necessities than were recommended by Governor Rexford G. Tugwell's Committee on Tonnage Requirements. So successful is our Caribbean Emergency Program today that Puerto Rico can hold out for the duration without fear of famine--and with the assurance that as long as the United States has food, supplies will keep coming.

It was a different story the latter part of 1942. At that time stocks of foodstuffs in warehouses or stores were running dangerously low. Edward Bash, War Food Administration representative, reported: "Rice continues to be the number one problem here in Puerto Rico. Daytime thinking and nighttime dreaming seems to revolve around that one item. Until the rice supply here is adequate, it will be well to remember that Puerto Rico translated into English means RICE."

Shortages

But rice wasn't the only food that couldn't be bought. There were no beans, codfish, pork fatbacks, evaporated milk, wheat flour, nor corn meal. These are basic foods in Puerto Rico.

Ordinarily, a country can turn to its land and grow its own foods. But not a small island that produces one main crop--sugar--and that depends on imported food supplies. As the food situation became more desperate, there were street fights and riots.

Sumner Welles was demanding immediate action "to alleviate a situation that threatens the military and political position of the United States in the Caribbean." Governor Tugwell was urging the War Food Administration to pyramid a 3-month stockpile for free distribution to the increasing number of persons who could not buy enough food to keep body and soul together.

As the general problem became more acute, the WFA was asked to take a more active part in procuring certain basic commodities for the account of the Puerto Rican General Supplies Administration--created to assist in securing and distributing supplies through the trade. This arrangement, entered into between the WFA and the Department of the Interior on July 17, 1942, marked the beginning of a commercial program under local sponsorship.

From January through October 1942 the Navy had reported 212 vessels lost off the Atlantic Coast, 128 off the coast of South America, 48 in the

Caribbean. If shipping were diverted to the Gulf ports, thence through a land-water route, perhaps the enemy could be caught with his periscope down. To establish an emergency food cache that would sustain the 61 islands in the Caribbean area, a land-water route was established with the full cooperation of the Governments of Cuba, Haiti and Santo Domingo. The WFA undertook to procure commodities and operate the new route.

Supplies were transported across the Florida Strait, then carried the length of Cuba by freight car; shuttled across the Windward Passage to the tunke of sky convoy; trucked from Port-au-Prince, Haiti over the Hispaniola Road to the eastern tip of Santo Domingo; then across the Mona Channel into Puerto Rico and on to the Virgin Islands.

By mid-January of 1943 the movement of small craft in the Caribbean was a familiar operation. The various routes required 7 steamships, 8 motor vessels, 9 schooners and 1 barge. From July '42 through October '43, approximately 33,000 tons of supplies moved over this island-hopping route. Fifty-seven percent of these vital supplies went to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

In June '43, when the crisis was passed, the Government agencies that had cooperated in the scheme agreed to suspend operations. It was necessarily expensive because it involved additional handling, longer transit, fumigation and reconditioning--but it was worth it. Puerto Rico is one of our foremost Caribbean outposts guarding the eastern approaches to the Panama Canal.

Program Formulated

While the emergency shipments were giving Puerto Rico a moment to catch its breath, a permanent program of food distribution on the island was being formulated. This program, basically, was aimed at using regular trade channels on the island as much as possible. The WFA, however, became the sole importer under the program, carried on in cooperation with the Department of the Interior.

The following table indicates some of the results attained during the calendar year 1943:

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>FDA Imports (Tons)</i>	<i>Requirements (Tons)</i>
Rice	131,377	120,000
Codfish, other fish	16,645	9,540
Lard	18,812	14,040
Pork fatbacks	4,714	7,020
Evaporated milk	16,958	9,240
Wheat flour	65,623	48,000
Dried beans	15,445	18,000
Onions	2,224	4,200
Garlic	1,620	720
Cheese	1,777	1,500
Laundry soap	13,055	12,000

The colloquial would have a word for it: WFA was cookin' with gas-- and on the front burner:

Distribution of foodstuffs on the island is handled through *regular trade channels*. WFA's part is to make allotments to wholesalers on the basis of population and consumption requirements. The food is purchased by over 700 wholesalers who, in turn, sell to about 12,000 retailers. Minor quantities are sold to consumers' cooperatives, governmental agencies, and nonprofit institutions.

Prices are set by the Office of Price Administration. There was a time when rice was as high as 60 cents a pound. With WFA as importer and distributor to the trade, rice retails at 8 cents per pound--a little below cost. The loss is absorbed by the Department of the Interior. Codfish also is sold below cost so that the consumer can purchase it at OPA's ceiling of 18 cents a pound. The same goes for lard, evaporated milk, and other basic commodities essential to the life of the people.

At the present time (early February) the WFA has on the island a full 3 to 6-month inventory of essential foods. Included in this category are rice; kidney, California, and small white beans; evaporated milk; lard; pork fatbacks; wheat flour; and canned fish. Emergency requirements as determined by the Governor's Committee will be met. Supplies of codfish, for example, will last for 3 to 6 months.

Meats

Supplies of meat products are large enough to meet emergency requirements for 2½ months, exclusive of lard and fatbacks of which there will be a normal supply. When negotiations now in progress with the Dominican Republic are completed, the WFA will import from this country adequate fresh beef supplies to meet Puerto Rican needs at a low price.

Oleomargarine and vegetable shortening supplies have been assured for 2½ months, as well as a month's supply of butter and cheese. Conditions permitting, shipments of potatoes and onions will be continued in coming months, although future availability of onions is somewhat uncertain. The supply of pimientos on hand is adequate to meet needs for many months.

Getting food to Puerto Rico against the sinister background of the submarine menace and other difficulties is the dramatic part of the WFA program. But it isn't the complete program by any means.

Food imports by Puerto Rico have been substantially augmented by food produced on the island under a system of agricultural price support. Before the establishment of this system, farmers had to depend on their own resources to market their crops at fair prices. Now the farmer is assured of a market and stable prices for his produce. When regular buyers do not pay the minimum prices set by the Government, the farmer goes to the WFA marketing centers where he does receive the support price.

A market news service was started about a year ago to circularize throughout Puerto Rico daily information on agricultural prices and conditions in the main markets of the island. Radio, newspapers, and the mails are used to spread the word around. Daily reports, issued from Rio Piedras, Ponce, Mayaguez, Aguadilla, and Arecibo are serving as an index for all market activities and are being used to advantage in the development of the price-support program.

Commodities have been furnished for relief feeding since August 1938. WFA donates the food with the provision that disposal will be accomplished in accordance with WFA requirements; the Puerto Rican Commodity Distribution Agency (under the Department of the Interior) receives the foods from WFA and acts as "insular sponsor" in supervising distribution. The main groups of eligible recipients are needy families.

The community school lunch program provides a meal each day to all eligible children in schools having facilities for preparation of meals. WFA commodities are supplemented to a limited extent by donations, local Government purchases, and fresh vegetables from WPA gardening projects.

Milk is distributed by volunteer workers of the Office of Civilian Defense to provide needy children below school age with some milk. Contributions from the public and gratuitous labor make this program possible.

Chronic Trouble

In considering Government feeding operations in Puerto Rico, one thing should be remembered: It didn't take a war or a U-boat scare to introduce want and misery. The war only tightened the economic noose. About 2 million people live on this island. The land that can be cultivated to subsistence crops is limited to 1 million acres. That means two persons per acre. It has been estimated that by 1960, the way the birth-rate is spiralling upward, there will be three persons to every arable acre of land. Malthus, the English economist, who had visions of the population outrunning the means of subsistence, has in Puerto Rico at least a partial confirmation of his theories.

Too little land--too many people. It is a difficult problem; it may take years to work out a lasting solution. But--a start has been made toward improving the living standard of the Puerto Ricans. And even a start represents a real victory to people who always have known the strafing of malnutrition and poverty.

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(The Department of Agriculture and the War Food Administration, as well as the AMA, FDA, and OD, have played a part in the Caribbean Emergency Program. In the interests of simplicity--though it is not strictly accurate--the War Food Administration is referred to in this article as the agency that has handled the program throughout-Editor).

LEE MARSHALL DIRECTS
OFFICE OF DISTRIBUTION

Lee Marshall, granted leave as chairman of the board of the Continental Baking Company, has been named head of the Office of Distribution--formerly the Food Distribution Administration. Mr. Marshall succeeds Roy F. Hendrickson, now deputy director of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

Mr. Marshall's first war work was with the Army Service Forces, where he organized and headed the Shipping Procedures Branch. On completion of this assignment, he returned briefly to his industrial post, but shortly was recalled to Government duty as food consultant to WPB Chairman Donald M. Nelson. On May 10, 1943, he was appointed Deputy Administrator of the War Food Administration in charge of the Office of Materials and Facilities. Early in November, he relinquished this post, returning to the Continental Baking Company, but continuing as consultant to Marvin Jones, War Food Administrator.

Under a recent redefinition of procedures, the Office of Distribution is responsible for all procurement, stockpiling, storage, and distribution of food by the War Food Administration, including the distribution of food acquired by virtue of the operations of the several loan programs of the WFA.

However, the Commodity Credit Corporation continues to procure and import food from the Dominion of Canada and sugar from the Caribbean area. The CCC also is responsible for such procurement and distribution programs it is now handling until May 1, 1944, when such programs will be handled by the Office of Distribution. The CCC, furthermore, makes such distribution of food acquired by importation or through its loan programs as may be requested by the Office of Distribution and approved by the Administrator.

The Office of Distribution is responsible for the preparation of directives for the foreign procurement of food.

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The high rate of livestock slaughter in recent weeks is reflected in figures on space occupancy of freezers in cold storage warehouses. As of January 1, the occupancy of freezers was 89 percent of net piling space, compared with 75 percent on January 1, 1943. Only a moderate increase was shown for coolers--68 percent compared with 60 percent a year earlier.

Holdings of all commodities on January 1, with the exception of apples and pears, again were substantially heavier than those of a year earlier; holdings also, with the exception of apples, pears, and lard, were heavier than the 1939-43 average.

WFA ANNOUNCES 1944
BUTTER ALLOCATIONS

Civilians will get about 76 out of every 100 pounds of farm and creamery butter estimated as available for use in 1944. U. S. military and war services have been allocated almost 18 out of every 100 pounds. The Russian Army will receive 5 out of every 100 pounds, and 1 out of every 100 pounds will go to U. S. territories, the Red Cross, friendly nations other than our military allies, or to be set aside in a contingency reserve to meet emergency civilians or military requirements in 1944.

The U. S. civilian supply will be about 47 million pounds smaller than in 1943, or about one-third pound less per person over the year--enough to allow each civilian slightly more than a pound of butter a month. About 120 million more pounds of butter have been allotted to U. S. armed forces for 1944 than they received in 1943. The increased allotments for war requirements have not necessitated equivalent reductions in civilian supplies inasmuch as the Government holds in stock sufficient butter to meet a large proportion of increased war needs.

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West Coast packers have been authorized to make available for sale to civilians through regular trade channels an additional quantity of 54 million pounds of raisins from this 1943 production. This action makes a total of 336 million pounds of raisins released by the WFA's Office of Distribution to civilians from the 1943 pack.

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Tribute was paid January 15 to workers and management of the Nation's food processing industry for the vital role they are playing in war production.

In a special broadcast announcing the extension of "A" awards to year-round food processors, Marvin Jones, War Food Administrator said, "The farmers and ranchers produce food. But the job doesn't end there. Most of this food must be processed. It must be milled. It must be canned. It must be dried. It must be frozen. It must be processed in many ways before it becomes food ready to be supplied to those who need it. The processing industry is doing that job and doing it well."

Others appearing on the program broadcast over the Blue Network were Major General Edmund B. Gregory, Quartermaster General, U. S. Army; Rear Admiral William B. Young, Chief of the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts and Paymaster General of the U. S. Navy; Paul S. Willis, President, Grocery Manufacturers of America, Inc.; and Hon. Mary T. Norton, Congresswoman from New Jersey and Chairman of the Committee on Labor.

LET'S HAVE ANOTHER CUP OF TEA

. . . . By Joe Boyle

You might as well reach into the kitchen cabinet and drag out that tea you have been saving. The chances of tea being rationed are just about as remote as Tojo making good on his promise to dictate peace from the White House. As a matter of fact, U. S. civilians will receive 76 million pounds of tea in 1944--about 16 million pounds more than in 1943--that is, if the shipping situation continues favorable.

Let's put those figures on a cup basis. An average of 200 cups can be brewed from a pound of tea. So 76 million pounds means 15,200,000,000 cups of tea. That figures out at the rate of 118 cups of tea per person, compared with a normal consumption of 140 cups.

But even in our best tea-drinking years, we are unable to hold a candle--or a cup of oolong--to the British. Compared with our normal 140 cups a year, the British get away with 2,400.

Tea-Drinking Areas

There is considerable variation in the amount of tea drunk in various localities of the United States. The heavy tea drinkers seem to be in the Midwest--around Chicago--and in New England--near Boston. But during the summer months, fairly large quantities of iced tea are consumed throughout the U. S., especially in the South.

Whether we have an occasional cup of tea or heat up the tea kettle several times a day, most of our supplies are now coming from India and Ceylon--with the exception of a small quantity flown out of China to be sold in this country to obtain money for Chinese relief. The Jap blitz effectively shut off imports from Java, Sumatra, and most of those from China. We get no tea from Japan now, of course.

But we're doing all right; and a big factor in keeping U. S. civilians supplied with tea is the marketing plan established by the War Food Administration. All tea is marketed through "qualified distributors," a term that describes those members of the tea industry who, during 1940 and 1941, handled the bulk of the tea imported in this country and who can be depended upon to keep tea flowing into trade channels in an orderly manner. From the qualified distributors--there are 17 of them--tea moves to packers, jobbers, and wholesale receivers for ultimate delivery to grocery stores, restaurants, hotels, etc.

WFA's marketing system, of course, affects in no way the safeguards that have been set up under the Tea Law of 1897 as amended. This law, administered by the Federal Security Agency's Food and Drug Administration, assures consumers of the quality, purity, and fitness for consumption of imported teas.

Government standards are established by seven members of a Board of Tea Experts, appointed annually. The law requires that the Board be appointed before the 15th of February each year, and it meets as soon thereafter as possible, selects a chairman, and decides upon the tea standards, which are put into effect officially as of May 1 each year.

Only tea standards of minimum purity and quality are established under the law, thus doing away with any attempt at price fixing. The provision in the law for establishing physical standards affords a definite measuring stick against which all teas entering the United States must be placed, and makes possible a uniform administration of the Tea Law.

After the standards have been fixed, quantities of the teas selected are distributed among the tea examiners and supplied through them to the trade at actual cost. The law provides that samples of teas entering the United States be compared with the Government standards according to the usages and customs of the tea trade, including the testing of an infusion in boiling water and, if necessary, a chemical analysis.

By this provision, tea buyers in the countries of production or foreign shippers are able to compare their teas with the U. S. Government standards before the teas are shipped. Thus, if the tests are carefully and conscientiously made, neither exporter nor importer assumes much risk of rejections.

Selecting Standards

Selecting standards of admissibility--in other words, setting up a yardstick for good tea--brings out all the skill of the tea taster. Take a typical session of the Board of Tea Experts--or a typical session of tea tasters in the trade during normal times. The scene is something like this:

There the tasters sit, around a revolving table some 5 feet in diameter. The revolving table is to accommodate them without their having to rise and walk around to sample the different teas. Cups in which tea leaves have been infused--that is, steeped in boiling water for the proper length of time--repose in front of the tasters.

Like bird-dogs on the scent of a covey of quail, the taster eagerly sniffs the aroma rising from the fragrant cup of tea. But aroma alone is not enough. The taster lifts the tea to his lips with a spoon; there is a loud "whoosh" as he draws the tea into his mouth spraying it over the palate and tongue, so the full effect of the flavor and aroma can be judged together. Critically he judges the quality, after which it is disposed of without swallowing. If a taster swallowed all the tea he sampled--well, at the end of the day he would be mighty full of tea.

No milk, cream, nor sugar are used in tasting tea. The aroma, flavor, and taste of the tea alone are what must be judged, and it is

upon these factors of quality that the testers concentrate. And they do concentrate. So expert are some tasters that they can spot the country of origin from which a particular tea has come and some even can tell you in which tea garden or estate the tea was grown. After the taste test is completed, the liquid is poured off and the tea leaves are compared with those of the standard for color, brightness, sheen and percent of stems.

An expert tea taster--either in Government or in the trade--can tell you a lot about tea. He will tell you that tea may be divided into three main classes: (1) fermented, or black; (2) unfermented, or green; and (3) semi-fermented, or oolong. The tea plant being practically the same plant in all countries, the differences in these classes are due to methods of manufacture, and local climatic, soil, and cultivation conditions.

Tea chests or cases in which the tea leaves are packed normally bear "garden marks" or brands--somewhat similar to our western cattle brands--showing from what estate or garden the teas come. There are hundreds of marks of tea, differing with the country, district, and garden.

Many Possible Blends

The number of possible blends of tea that packers may market is almost unlimited. These blends vary in accordance with packers' judgment of the types most acceptable to the public taste.

Then there's that matter of "Orange Pekoe," a term all teadrinkers recognize. Actually it has nothing to do with oranges nor has it anything to do with a particular kind or quality of tea. It simply is a grade consisting largely of the first and second leaves of the tea shoot, and results from sifting the tea, after firing, through a sieve which has a mesh of a certain size. Orange Pekoe from high-grown tea bushes is a very fine tea; from low-grown bushes it is not as good as some of the larger-leaf sizes from mountain-grown bushes; and it can be distinctly inferior. Incidentally, there has been some confusion about the way Pekoe should be pronounced. Some hold out for "Pee-ko" and others argue for "Peck-o." Either way is correct, according to Webster's New International Dictionary.

William H. Ukers, in his most interesting book, "All About Tea," recommends that tea should be made this way:

1. Buy the highest grade of the kind of tea suited to your taste.
2. Use freshly drawn, slightly soft or slightly hard cold water from the tap.
3. Bring the water to a bubbling boil.
4. Allow one rounded, standard teaspoonful of tea for each cup.

5. Pour freshly boiling water over the tea leaves in a heated earthenware, porcelain, or glass pot and let the leaves steep for three to five minutes, depending upon the kind of tea used. Stir while steeping.
6. Pour off the liquor into another heated china vessel and never use the leaves a second time.
7. Keep the beverage hot and serve it sweetened or unsweetened--with milk or cream or without--whichever way you like your tea. If sugar and milk or cream are used, put them in the cup in this order before the tea is poured.

"All About Tea" describes the first effort to start a tea industry in the United States near Greenville, S. C., and subsequent experiments at McIntosh, Ga., in 1850; at Summerville, S. C., in 1880. Another tea-growing venture was started at Summerville in 1890 under auspices of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and from 1900, yearly appropriations varying from \$1,000 to \$10,000 were made during the 15 years following. The project, known as the Pinehurst Tea Garden, was abandoned in 1915. It probably comes as a surprise to you to learn that tea will even grow in the United States.

While tea has never been grown in this country on a big-scale commercial basis, the product is very closely intertwined in our history. There was the Golden Age of the China Clippers--the three-masted schooners that set records which look respectable even in this day of steam. The "Lightning," for example, specially distinguished herself by doing 436 sea miles in 24 hours--an average of more than 18 miles an hour and an all-time record for sailing vessels. It was important to get the tea to market in a hurry in the 1840's and 1850's. Other Clippers that distinguished themselves in the China Trade were the "Flying Cloud," the "North Wind," the "Rainbow," and the "Trade Wind." Their very names reflect the romance of a period such as this country will never see again.

The tea business is prosaic today, with cultivation, processing, and marketing reduced to a system. But even if some of the romance has been taken out of the tea industry, you can be sure that the tea itself is a uniform, carefully blended product--wholesome in every respect. You also can be sure that the tea trade will keep it that way.

Let's have another cup of tea.

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The Bureau of Agricultural Economics reports in the Marketing and Transportation Situation that the farmer's share of the consumer's food dollar remained at 58 cents in November for the fourth consecutive month. The farmer's share is expected to average about 57 cents for the calendar year 1943--the highest annual average since 1919.

VEGETABLE SEEDS IN 1944

. . . . By W. A. Wheeler

Snow still blankets the ground in many parts of the country, but those over-optimistic souls--the Victory Gardeners--already are thinking about spring planting. They are thumbing through seed catalogs illustrated with bright red tomatoes, string beans that look good enough to put in the pot "as is," green onions that can almost be smelled. As far as the seeds to plant these wonderful vegetables are concerned, the Victory Gardeners' dreams can come true--there are plenty of most kinds of vegetable seed available this year.

Take the so-called heavy seeds--beans, peas, and corn. Production of these as a group totaled 331 million pounds in 1943 compared with 312 million pounds in 1942.

The "light" seeds take in the old standbys you are familiar with--lettuce, beet, cabbage, cauliflower, tomatoes, and others. They also include a few you may not have heard of--mangelwurzel, romaine lettuce, kohlrabi, and salsify. At any rate, production of the light seeds was 24 million pounds in 1943 compared with 21 million pounds in 1942.

Victory Gardens

The increase in production might be accounted for this way: When the people of this country get a grim look on their faces and begin spading up back lots as they did last year, the seed trade takes one startled peek and begins producing more seed.

Of course our seed supplies must be allocated; that is, divided among U. S. civilians, the allies, and other groups. But Victory Gardeners will do pretty well at that. During the period from July 1, 1943 through June 30, 1944, the War Food Administration has divided 391 million pounds of seed (this quantity includes the seed produced in 1943 plus certain stocks carried over from the previous year) as follows: To civilians, about 70 percent; to U. S. territories and friendly nations, 1 percent; for a contingency reserve, 26 percent; and to the Allies, 3 percent.

Actually, it is good strategy to send seed to our allies. It is better to ship the seed abroad so that our allies can grow their own crops than to grow the crops here and ship the food abroad in vessels that are badly needed for transporting munitions.

Aside from the strategy, there's a little poetic justice in our sending seed to Europe now. Before the war, we obtained large quantities of vegetable seed from continental Europe. After war broke out, we got busy and expanded production in California, Oregon, southern Idaho, and other sections. We expanded seed production of the types that had long

been grown in this country, and also of varieties or types that had seldom, if ever, been grown here for seed before.

Vegetable seed growing is no cinch; it is, as a matter of fact, a highly specialized business. Most Victory Gardeners don't know it, perhaps, but there are two broad classes of vegetable seed--annuals and biennials. The annuals--seeds like beans, peas, sweetcorn, radishes, and lettuce--mature in 1 year. The biennials--such as cabbage, carrots, onions, and beets--require the greater part of two growing seasons (2 years from seed) to produce mature seed for planting.

Here is the way beet seed is produced:

In California, this seed is usually planted four rows at a time by means of gang drills in seed beds. When the seeds have sprouted, the rows are generally cultivated mechanically two or four at a time, and weeded by hand in the row. Later on, the mature beets are pulled, laid on the ground, and the tops removed.

Between December and February the roots--the part people generally eat--are sacked and hauled to the fields where they are transplanted. These transplanted beets mature and go to seed. Then the tops are cut, windrowed, and finally power-threshed.

Two Contracts

At this point the seedsman takes over--receiving the rough-threshed seed, milling, cleaning, and finally sacking it as commercial seed. Two types of standard contract are in common use between the commercial seedsman and the farmer who grows biennial seeds. Under the "1-year contract," the farmer receives roots and bulbs provided by the seedsman and transplants and grows them. Under the "2-year contract," the farmer has full charge of the crop during both growing seasons--he conducts all farming operations from the time he plants the mother seed until he turns the harvest over to the seedsman for threshing.

The biennial seeds always cause the most trouble in any program to expand production, and this is particularly true of beet, cabbage, carrot, and onion seed. If production of these four kinds can be maintained at high levels, the War Food Administration doesn't worry.

Now, Victory Gardeners, while supplies of most vegetable seeds are ample, there will be no beet, cabbage, or onion seed to waste. Make every seed count. If you have more of these seeds than you can use, pass them on to your neighbor.

Here's a tip on all kinds of seed: Buy early. Then get your garden planted at the proper time; take care of it all through the growing season--some people start out strong and end up weak; and the vegetables you can't eat fresh, put up in cans. America needs another bumper crop from the Victory Gardeners as well as the farmers in 1944.

DRIED APRICOTS TO BE MADE
AVAILABLE FOR HOSPITAL USE

Hospital patients will receive a supply of dried apricots through release of part of the 1943 pack to civilian hospitals. But no dried apricots will be available for general, civilian consumption because of the exceptionally small dried apricot pack last year. Hospitals will be eligible to obtain apricot allotments on the basis of the average number of patients served daily in 1942.

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New bottles in 1944 to replace current losses were asked by the Brewing Industry Advisory Committee at a meeting in Washington, D. C. January 14. The committee, in requesting replacements of bottle supplies, pointed out that breakage and other losses would deplete present container stocks to such an extent that brewers might find it impossible to market all the beer they produce in 1944. The group asked that brewers be allowed to purchase as many bottles in 1944 as in 1943.

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Exhibitors of pedigreed livestock are assured continuation of their present rail transportation rates and regulations in the Northeast by a recent decision of the Interstate Commerce Commission against a proposal to cancel these customary rates.

Early in 1942, the railroads east of the Mississippi River began proceedings aimed at freeing themselves from the necessity of hauling this type of traffic at reduced rates. Negotiations followed between the railroads and the War Food Administration, the International Association of Fairs and Expositions, and similar organizations.

In 1943 the railroads operating east of the Mississippi River and north of the Ohio and Potomac Rivers filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission supplements to their tariffs in which they proposed to cancel the reduced rates. At the ICC hearing, this cancellation was opposed by representatives of the WFA and other organizations.

This decision against the carriers' proposal will benefit not only breeders of pure-bred livestock, WFA officials say, but also the various agricultural colleges, extension services, and, through their educational programs, the general public.

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The Nation's ice industry has adequate storage capacity and production equipment and believes it can fulfill wartime requirements for food preservation, the Ice Industry Advisory Committee told Government officials at a meeting in Washington, D. C. January 17.

KRAUT INDUSTRY ASKED TO PROCESS WINTER CABBAGE

Faced with the largest winter cabbage crop in history, the War Food Administration has asked the kraut industry to process 80,000 tons of southern cabbage into kraut.

Meeting with the Kraut Industry Food Advisory Committee in Washington January 18 and 19, the WFA called attention to an expected 1944 winter production of 515,000 tons of cabbage compared with a winter season crop of 435,000 tons in 1942--the previous high record. Only 278,600 tons were produced in the winter season of 1943.

Normally the civilian market uses about 160,000 tons of cabbage per year for kraut purposes, the committee pointed out. In 1943 there were available approximately 95,500 tons of cabbage for kraut, out of which the military forces needed approximately 90 percent. A strong demand for kraut for the civilian market exists at present. In order to meet this demand, while at the same time making use of a crop that is temporarily in abundance, the industry is being asked to consider using part of the winter crop for kraut purposes.

The committee asked that assurance of an adjustment in the price ceiling on kraut be made and that tin or glass quotas, or both, be made available. The committee also requested that growers of winter cabbage in southern States agree to leave the cabbage in the fields until it matures more suitably for kraut manufacture.

The committee said that kraut manufacturers would contract with cabbage growers for at least 50 percent of their requirements for 1944 cabbage on the basis of yields not exceeding 12 tons per acre from any individual grower, provided a Government buy-back program is put into effect. The committee recommended that the industry use 15 gallon kegs instead of 14 gallon kegs in order to conserve keg materials.

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POTATO STOCKS SET NEW RECORD

Stocks of merchantable potatoes available for sale in the hands of growers and local buyers on January 1, 1944, were of record size. The estimates of the Crop Reporting Board show holdings this year of 138 million bushels, compared with about 101 million bushels a year earlier, and the 10-year (1931-40) average of less than 104 million.

The percentage loss from shrinkage, decay, etc., is expected to be larger than from the 1942 crop, especially in the heavy producing States of Maine and Idaho, and in some States in the Middle West. Frost damage was considerable on late harvested acreage in Maine and Idaho.

WOODEN CONTAINERS: SCARCE

. . . . By L. C. Carey

We have learned how to use second-hand automobile tires. We re-cap them when they wear thin, we change them around occasionally to insure even wear, keep them properly inflated, and drive at the lawful 35 miles per hour. Through careful use, these tires last us a long time.

This year we must learn how to use second-hand wooden containers for fresh fruits and vegetables. There won't be enough new ones to meet all requirements.

Original "emptiers"--grocery stores, restaurants, hotels, Army and Navy posts, war-plant cafeterias and should open containers carefully, preserve them, and find some way of returning them to redistribution depots. Middlemen--wholesalers, jobbers, truckers, shippers--should cooperate with the original emptiers in returning the containers to the depots.

Container salvage is new to some phases of the food industry, but it is something to which the trade can become accustomed. It is something, actually, to which the trade *must* become accustomed.

Large Requirements

If crop yields are normal, wooden container materials will be short of the demand by 10 to 20 percent. For example, if the 1944 tree fruit crop is equal to the 1942 crop, 16 million more baskets will be needed than actually were used in 1943. But new fruit baskets will not be available to that extent in 1944.

There is a general scarcity of commercial wood and lumber products. Heavy military demands for containers, a more than 200 percent increase since 1942 in the use of lumber for packing and shipping, and a serious falling off in lumber and pulp wood production are the principal reasons. That shortage makes it difficult to secure more new containers for civilian use.

Salvage and re-use seem to be the only answer.

Fortunately, the used container industry is well established and prepared to handle and distribute supplies made available to it. Dealers in used containers are located in most markets--but they are operating under severe handicaps of labor, tire, and gasoline restrictions the same as everyone else. It is a physical impossibility for them to pick up used containers from door to door as some were able to do in normal times. Jobbers and wholesalers should assist with the collecting or "pick-up" function; that is, truckers should pick up empties at the same time they deliver food, just as a milkman does.

Used container dealers are prepared to distribute more containers than are now being handled. But they are not prepared to stockpile and warehouse them for extended periods. Moreover, they are not, in many instances, prepared to finance such stock-piling or warehousing unless they have some assurance that there is a market for the containers. Many irreplaceable containers already have been lost for lack of demand. Here is an opportunity for growers and shippers to create demand for used containers.

Growers in New Jersey and Maryland and other areas close to large receiving markets have used second-hand packages for years, particularly round stave baskets, hampers, and wirebound crates. There has even been some movement of these types of packages to some of the more distant producing areas. But second-hand containers have been used only when there was a definite price advantage over the new ones. There never has been any appreciable tendency for growers to stock pile in advance of actual needs, because the supply of used packages generally has been about equal to the demand. Thus, in other years, growers have been in a position to choose as between new and second-hand packages--on a price basis.

Under present conditions, the choice may lie between using whatever is available, either new or used, or doing without. Types not hitherto used may have to be employed in some instances--used apple boxes, for instance, instead of baskets. The usual plentiful supply of used bushel baskets is virtually nonexistent this year, with little prospect of being replenished any time soon.

Advice to Apple Growers

In reviewing the package situation for his growers recently, one leader in the apple industry in the Middle West stated in part:

"The only alternative our growers have is to start accumulating at once supplies of used baskets and boxes. There are generous supplies of these now available from used container dealers in Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, and Kansas City. We shall be glad to supply names of these dealers on request.

"It is expensive to handle and store these used containers for any long period in the city. But most growers have plenty of barn storage room. They should start taking used packages now. If the supply is not absorbed promptly, used-container dealers are likely to discontinue collecting and later on it will be impossible to find baskets--new or otherwise.

"If growers get their supplies in now, they can spend any period of bad weather inside sorting and reconditioning these packages in any way that will make them better suited for market."

That man was giving the growers good advice.

Special freight rates already are in effect for the shipment of second-hand fruit and vegetable containers from Official Classification Territory into Southern Freight Association Territory, and from the Chicago area and points east of the Mississippi river into the Pacific Coast region. Applications for extension of reduced rates to other areas are pending. The idea, of course, is to increase the movement of second-hand packages from consuming markets to producing sections.

The entire wooden container situation might be summed up this way: New containers will be short on the market this season. Growers and shippers must reconcile themselves to using second-hand packages; and other segments of the food trade--wholesalers, jobbers, retailers, restaurants, hotels, Army and Navy posts, and others--should cooperate with used container dealers in getting the packages back to the producing areas.

This year it is a case of second-hand containers--or else.

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EXPANDED IN-PLANT FEEDING

PROGRAM PLANNED FOR 1944

Organized labor groups met in Washington, D. C. January 10 to discuss with Government officials plans for expansion of in-plant feeding facilities for industrial workers in 1944. Because of wartime changes in food distribution and working and living conditions, war workers are increasingly dependent upon in-plant feeding to maintain health and productive efficiency.

The American Federation of Labor, Congress of Industrial Organizations, Railroad Brotherhoods, and United Mine Workers sent representatives to a meeting of the labor advisor committee of the Inter-Agency Committee on Food for Workers. This group will work with the Food Distribution Administration and the Inter-Agency Committee.

To facilitate the program, the Office of Price Administration is now working out the last details of a plan for handling food allotments for war plant cafeterias and lunch rooms apart from other commercial eating establishments. This change will make it a fairly simple matter for war plants that expand their feeding programs to obtain the necessary adjustments in their food allowances. Reasonable prices will be maintained under price control regulations.

Under this program the FDA will: (1) Keep labor advised as to changes in policies; (2) develop understandings as to how problems can be solved in fairness to all; and (3) make available facilities and services. Labor was asked to consider: (1) Assuming responsibility for getting out information to members on the way the program operates and its objectives; (2) working with food committees; (3) recruiting culinary workers; (4) reporting on feeding facilities in plants.

WFA ANNOUNCES 1944

CHEESE PRODUCTION PROGRAM

The War Food Administration, through Food Distribution Order No. 92, is restricting the total production in 1944 of all types of cheese other than cheddar, cottage, pot, and bakers' to the quantity produced in 1942. The order, effective February 1, is part of the WFA's program to obtain the most efficient use of the wartime milk supply.

So far as war use is concerned, cheddar is the most valuable cheese type. It keeps and ships best under difficult wartime climatic storage, and transportation conditions. Cheddar constitutes more than 95 percent of all war purchases of cheese, and it also is the variety civilians most prefer.

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About 8.3 billion pounds of our total supply of edible and inedible fats and oils will be used for food in 1944. Of this total, civilians will get 68 percent; military and war services, 9 percent; our allies, 21 percent; and contingency reserves, 1 percent.

The 1944 civilian allocation breaks down as follows on a per capita consumption basis: 12.1 pounds of butter, compared with 12.5 pounds in 1943; 13.9 pounds of lard, compared with 14.3 last year; 14.3 pounds of shortening and other oils, against 16.4 pounds a year ago; and 3.6 pounds of margarine, compared with 3.3 pounds in 1943. These figures are on a fat content basis with the exception of butter.

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The WFA has extended its price support program temporarily to include Good and Choice butcher hogs weighing from 300 to 330 pounds. The action, effective January 27, was taken to protect hog raisers who have run into difficulties in marketing their animals and who have been forced to feed to above 300 pounds--the previous upper weight limit in the price support program.

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Farm wage rates on January 1, 1944, were the highest for the date in 20 years, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reports. Wage rates per month, with board, averaged \$63.01, compared with \$50.91 January 1, 1943. Rates per month without board averaged \$76.06 compared with \$62.43 last year.

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Stocks of onions on January 1, 1944 were 2,817,000 sacks of 100 pounds each, the smallest since January 1, 1932.

- PERTAINING TO MARKETING -

The following reports and publications, issued recently, may be obtained upon request. To order, check on this page the publications desired, detach, and mail to the Office of Distribution, War Food Administration, Washington 25, D. C. No letter is required.

Addresses

Meeting Our 1944 Objectives. January 24, 1944. 6pp. (processed)
 Lee Marshall

Food Trends in 1944. January 25, 1944. 13pp. (processed)
 Norman Leon Gold

Wartime Meat Programs. January 14, 1944. 6pp. (processed)
 H. E. Reed

The War Job of Milk Distributors. January 17, 1944. 6pp. (processed)
 Tom G. Stitts

Reports

Nutrition and the War. Opinions about Food, and Their Significance for Better Nutrition. November 1943. 29pp. (processed)

Distribution Problems of a Shifting Population. December 20, 1943. 23pp. (processed)

Soybeans and Soya Products. Program for meeting of Interdepartmental Nutrition Coordinating Committee. December 7, 1943. 25pp. (processed)

The War Food Administration's Achievement "A" Award for Food Processors. January 1944. 2pp. (processed)

Conversion Factors and Weights and Measures for Agricultural Commodities and Their Products. Section B - Net Content Weights of Specified Containers. December 1943. 30pp. (processed)
Note: Section A, Conversion Factors, will not be ready for distribution for approximately 1 month.

LAST CALL. If you wish to receive Marketing Activities for another year and have not yet filled out the mailing list revision form mailed you recently, please do so at once. If you have mislaid the form, detach this page, write at the bottom "I wish to receive Marketing Activities for another year," and mail to Marketing Reports Division, War Food Administration, Washington, D. C.--Editor.

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